

Alliance Against Family Violence And Sexual Assault Of Bakersfield Is Co-Recipient Of The Ed Stout Award

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Yesterday, Congressmen Jim Costa (D-CA) and Ted Poe (R-TX) joined members of the bipartisan Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus to honor this year's outstanding individuals that have given countless hours of their time and service to helping victims of crime. Costa and Poe co-founded the bipartisan Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus in 2005.

"All of these recipients are those who selflessly give time and compassion to others who have suffered from a violent crime or domestic violence," said Costa. "Crime knows no boundary or demographic, and victims of crime can be our family, friends or neighbors. Our winners this year go above and beyond the call of duty in helping victims and survivors of crime through very traumatic time periods."

"Quiet heroes are those victim advocates that help people when crime is committed against them. These advocates go out of their way to help victims regain dignity and physical and mental strength," said Poe. "While there are hundreds of victim advocates, today we honor a select few who have risen in a time of need and stand strong."

The 2009 Victims' Rights Caucus Recipients

Ed Stout Memorial Award for Outstanding Victim Advocacy – Alliance Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault. The Alliance represents everything that Ed Stout worked so hard for during his work on behalf of crime victims and survivors. They are a nonprofit, grassroots organization that since 1979 has provided support and services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in Kern County and the surrounding area. These services are free, and are bilingual, which serves Kern County's diverse ethnic background. Their strong focus on assisting victims of violence against women in rural areas is remarkable. The Alliance Against Family Violence and Sexual Assault was nominated by Costa.

Ed Stout Memorial Award for Outstanding Victim Advocacy – Sheryl Cates. Ms. Sheryl Cates has spent the last 25 years advocating for victims of domestic violence at all levels. As Executive Director at Women's Protective Services in Lubbock, TX, Sheryl worked directly with victims as well as supervising staff who provide services to victims. Also, as CEO of the Texas Council on Family Violence, National Domestic Violence Hotline and loveisrespect.org National

Teen Dating Abuse Helpline, Sheryl is recognized nationally as an expert in the field of domestic violence and as someone who can be counted on to participate in any efforts to support the needs of victims and their families. Cates was nominated by Congressman Lamar Smith (R-TX-21)

Suzanne McDaniel Public Awareness Award – Katherine Cabaniss. Ms. Cabaniss is the Executive Director of Houston Crime Stoppers. As a former Assistant District Attorney, she has a passion for preventing and fighting crime. During her time with Crime Stoppers, Ms. Cabaniss has built strategic alliances with people and organizations that assist victims of crime, including local school districts, apartment property management companies, and women's shelters. She has strengthened Crime Stoppers relationship with the media, and in doing so, has used her voice to promote safe communities and justice for victims of crime. Cabaniss was nominated by Representative Ted Poe (R-TX-02).

Lois Haight Award of Excellence and Innovation – Steve Twist. Mr. Twist has worked tirelessly to ensure that every jurisdiction in America provides victims with rights in the criminal justice system and that those rights are enforceable by the individual victim. He has worked as counsel to the Navajo Nation, aiding in the drafting of various victim provisions, and is the principal author of the Arizona constitutional amendment for victims' rights and the Arizona Victims' Rights Implementation Act, which together are the strongest victims' rights legal provisions in the country. Mr. Twist was nominated by Congressman John Shadegg (R-AZ-03)

Eva Murillo Unsung Hero Award – Jenny Wieland. Jenny Wieland's 17 year old daughter and only child was murdered by another teen in 1992. She turned her pain into purpose and has worked tirelessly to reduce youth violence, in hopes that other mothers would not have to experience the loss of a child to a violent crime. In 1994, Jenny Wieland became a founding board member of Mothers Against Violence in America (MAVIA). In early 1995, she left a career as an insurance broker to become MAVIA's Program Director and first employee. During her seven-year tenure with MAVIA, she helped create and implement MAVIA's many national and local programs, including the acclaimed Washington State model of Day of National Concern About Young People and Gun Violence, which encourages young Americans in classrooms and communities across the country to sign the Student Pledge Against Gun Violence. Currently, Wieland is serving as Executive Director of Families and Friends of Violent Crime Victims in Washington State. Wieland was nominated by Congressman Dave Reichert (R-WA-08)

Allied Professional Award – Michael Davis, President of Appriss, Inc. Michael Davis is

the co-founder and president of Appriss, the provider of local, state and federal automated victim information and notification services and automated victim protection order services. In 1994, Mary Byron was murdered on her 21st birthday by her former boyfriend who was in jail in Louisville, Kentucky. Mary and her parents asked to be notified if and when he was released, which did not happen.

In response to this preventable tragedy, Davis and his partner created VINE® (Victim Information and Notification Everyday), which provides confidential, around-the-clock notifications to victims about the status of their offenders. VINE keeps crime victims and survivors informed and involved in their cases, in turn promoting personal and community safety. Today, Appriss provides VINE and related services to more than 75% of our nation. States participating in the Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification (SAVIN) grant program have entrusted Appriss as their technology provider. Davis was nominated by Representative John Yarmuth (D-KY-03).